CALAMITY B-SIDE

18+

ART & STORY: RATBAT
EDITING: CEREBRALERROR

SKREKK TING!

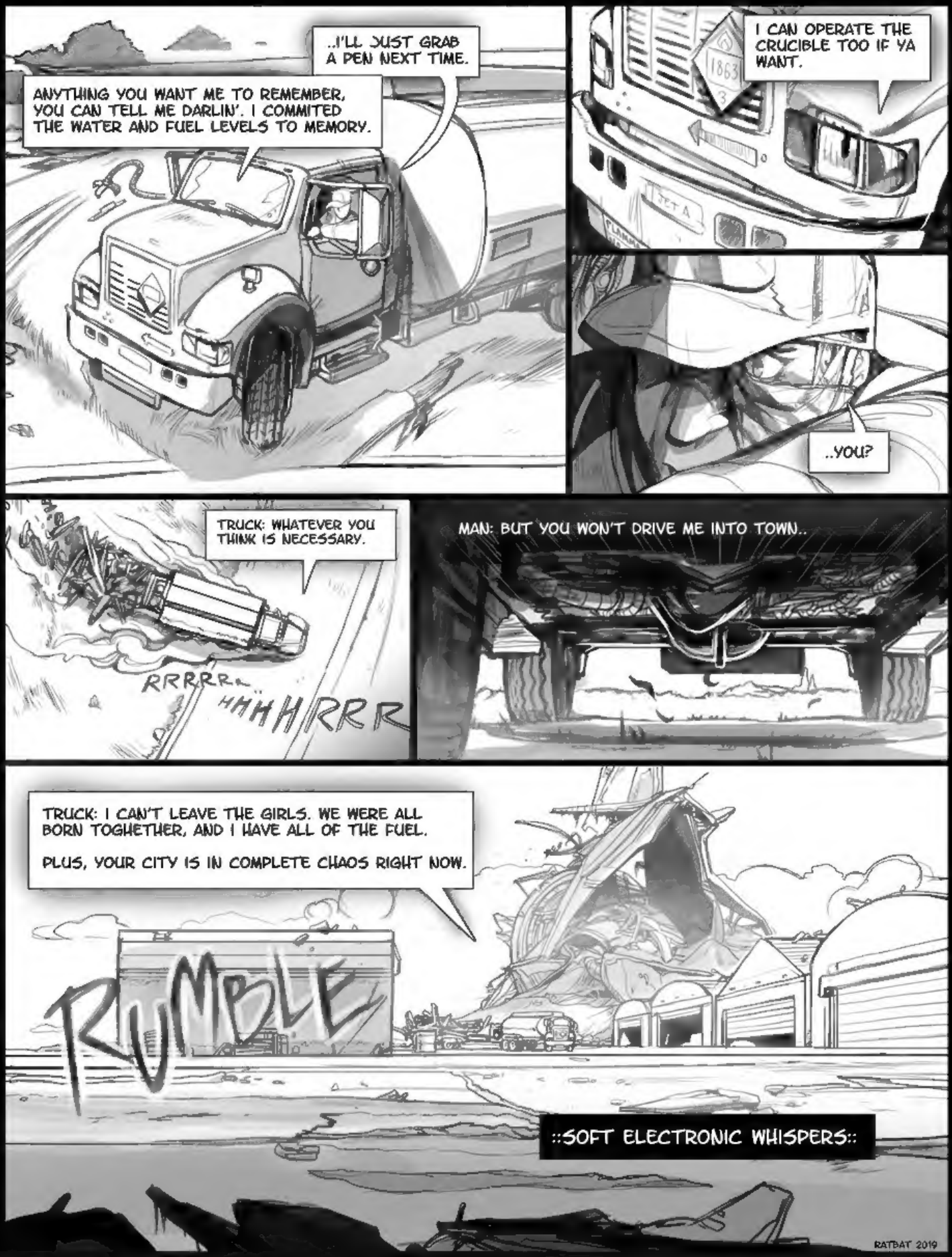
RUMRRRBLERR

OK, I THINK THAT'L BE ENOUGH FOR NOW.

GUWP

OOPS!

SORRY ABOUT THAT.


..I'LL JUST GRAB A PEN NEXT TIME.
ANYTHING YOU WANT ME TO REMEMBER, YOU CAN TELL ME DARLIN'. I COMMITED THE WATER AND FUEL LEVELS TO MEMORY.
I CAN OPERATE THE CRUCIBLE TOO IF YA WANT.
1863
JET A
..YOU?
TRUCK: WHATEVER YOU THINK IS NECESSARY.
RRRRR...
HHHHRRR
MAN: BUT YOU WON'T DRIVE ME INTO TOWN..
TRUCK: I CAN'T LEAVE THE GIRLS. WE WERE ALL BORN TOGHETHER, AND I HAVE ALL OF THE FUEL.
PLUS, YOUR CITY IS IN COMPLETE CHAOS RIGHT NOW.
RUMBLE
::SOFT ELECTRONIC WHISPERS::
RATBAT 2019

THE HUMAN IS ASKING ME TO BRING HIM TO THE CITY AGAIN. I'VE DECLINED, BUT I'M WORRIED. HIS BEHAVIOR IS BECOMING ERRATIC, AND HE'S IN DIRE NEED OF MAINTENANCE.
IF YOU TAKE HIM TO TROYA, WE MAY NEVER SEE EITHER OF YOU AGAIN. IT'S CHAOS THERE.
HE HAS A CONCUSSION, SEVERAL FRACTURES, AND SEVERE INTERNAL CONTUSIONS. HE'S IN PAIN. WE CANNOT HELP HIM HERE.
PLEASE KEEP HIM HERE, PLEASE.
WE'LL BE IN GREAT DANGER WITHOUT HIS GUIDANCE.
PING
GRHK! I...AGH...
GASP!
MR. EYCK?
"BOOK SHELF"
AAOWW, SHIT... HRRRF...
RATBAT 2019

OHF!
grip
IS IT BROKEN?
IT MIGHT BE A DEFENSE MECHANISM?
HUMAN, STOP EMITTING THAT SOUND!
AAAAAAAHHHH
YOU ARE A...MECHANIC?
* ELECTRIC SCREECH *
THIS IS GOOD, WE CAN USE HIM.
HUMAN-MECHANIC, WE HAVE A SIBLING IN DISTRESS IN THE NEIGHBORING STRUCTURE. IF YOU ASSIST IN HELPING THEM, WE WILL LET YOU GO. BUT...
WE'LL BE WATCHING. AND WE WILL KNOW IF YOU CAUSE THEM HARM.
OH GOD!

THERE WE GO, ALL BETTER.
HUMAN, THE EFFORT YOU'RE PUTTING INTO GATHERING MATERIAL FOR MY REPAIR IS COMMENDABLE, BUT IT'S NOT NECESSARY. NOR IS IT ADVISED, YOUR CURRENT CONDITION IS WORRISOME.
I JUST... NEED TO FIGURE OUT THE MELTING POINT IN ORDER TO... WAIT, WHAT'D YOU JUST SAY?
I JUST NEED YOU TO CUT ME LOOSE SO I CAN MOVE. THE DAMAGE IS BAD, BUT I BELIEVE THE PHRASE IS: YOU LOOK WORSE THAN I FEEL.
ONCE THE FOREIGN DEBRIS IS REMOVED, THE DAMAGE SHOULD HEAL WITH TIME. IS THAT NOT HOW HUMAN INJURIES WORK?
WHAT IS THE MATTER, HUMAN?

WHAT'S THE MATTER? THIS - ALL THIS - IS THE MATTER. THERE'S BEEN SOME KIND OF CATASTROPHE AND I'M WANDERING AROUND AN AIRSTRIP HALLUCINATING THAT VEHICLES ARE TALKING TO ME. I'VE GONE INSANE. I CAN'T EVEN MAKE MYSELF LEAVE.
AND CUTTING THIS LOOSE WILL TAKE ALL DAY. MAYBE LONGER. NOT WITHOUT POWER. THERE'S NOT ENOUGH FUEL LEFT TO RUN THE EMERGENCY GENERATOR ON THIS.
HOW ABOUT AN ACETYLENE TORCH? THAT SHOULD NOT REQUIRE POWER TO USE.
I SUPPOSE THAT COULD WORK, DEPENDING ON HOW HIGH THE - WAIT, HOW DO YOU EVEN KNOW ABOUT THIS STUFF?
THERE IS A GLOBALIZED DATA NETWORK. YOU CALL IT THE INTERNET. I SEE IT CLEARLY.
THE INTERNET...RIGHT... THEY CALLED YOU HERMANO, YOU KNOW.

THERE SHOULD BE A COUPLE OF TORCHES STORED INSIDE THE MAIN BUILDING, BUT THE DOOR'S LOCKED DOWN.

POKE

WITHOUT POWER, I'D HAVE TO TAKE THE WHOLE DOOR OFF TO GET INSIDE, UNLESS... CAN YOU HAVE THE OTHERS SEARCH AROUND THE AIRFIELD? THERE MIGHT BE ANOTHER CUTTER LAYING AROUND SOMEWHERE.

* ELECTRIC SCREECH *

* SONIC CHIRPING *

IF WE CAN'T FIND ONE OUT HERE, I COULD ALSO TRY AND GET INTO THE MAIN BUILDING THROUGH THE TOWER, BUT I'D HAVE TO GO IN THROUGH A WINDOW. I'D NEED HELP.

PLEASE, BE QUICK.

YOU ONLY NEED TO ASK US, MR. EYCK.

EVERYONE, HELP OUR HUMAN FIND AN ACETYLENE CUTTER! CHECK IN AND AROUND THE STRUCTURES!

AHH!

ROGER!

ROGER.

ROGER!

MOMENTS LATER....

ALRIGHT, STOP HERE. I CAN GET IN THROUGH THAT WINDOW. I'LL GRAB THE TOOLS AND A FEW OTHER THINGS. IT WON'T TAKE ME LONG, I CAN HANDLE THIS.

TAK TAKA

OKAY. BUT IF YOU BEGIN TO FEEL FAINT, COME BACK TO THE WINDOW, QUICK!

SHUT

OKAY, 'TRUCK-MOM.'

WHAT THE FUCK. 'TRUCK-MOM?' WHAT AM I EVEN SAYING?

WHY AM I HELPING THEM? THEY'RE NOT REAL, THEY CAN'T BE! WHY CAN'T I MAKE MYSELF LEAVE?

I COULD JUST RUN. RIGHT NOW. THIS WOULD BE A GREAT TIME, ACTUALLY.

JUST... WALK OUT. I WOULDN'T MAKE IT BACK TO TOWN, NOT IN THE SHAPE I'M IN, BUT WHO KNOWS? THERE'S GOT TO BE HOUSES. PEOPLE. I COULD FIND OTHERS.

BOOP

I COULD WAKE UP.

WATER, SODA, SOME FIG BARS, EPOXY...A SIX-PACK OF BEER... BUT NO ACETYLENE TORCH. OF COURSE. BECAUSE IT'S THE TOWER. WHAT ELSE WAS I EXPECTING?

ZIP

WELL, AT LEAST I FOUND A BIT MORE FOOD...

NO LUCK IN HERE. I'M GOING TO BE HONEST WITH YOU... EVEN IF WE CAN CUT THE DEBRIS LOOSE, THE DAMAGE TO YOUR FRIEND...

BRAKKA - BRAKKA

MAYBE THE OTHERS HAVE HAD GREATER SUCCESS?

EVEN IF THEY HAVE... THE FUSELAGE DAMAGE... HE WON'T BE FLIGHTWOR...

HMM?

WHAT IS IT, HUMAN?

100

FUEL

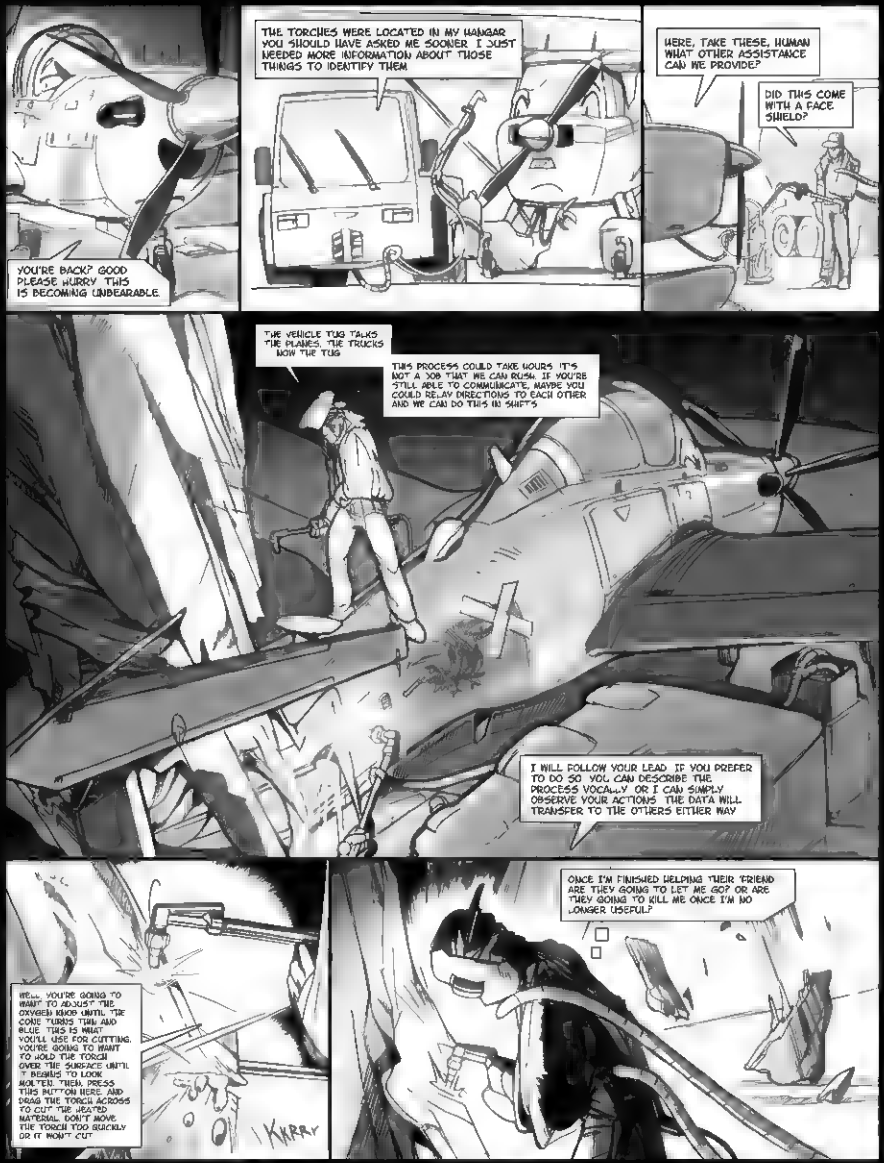
CAN...CAN YOU SEE THAT? THERE ARE PEOPLE RUNNING OVER THERE, PAST THE FENCE.

I CAN'T SEE IT...ARE YOU SURE YOU'RE FEELING ALRIGHT? PERHAPS YOU SHOULD COME DOWN...

VROOOM

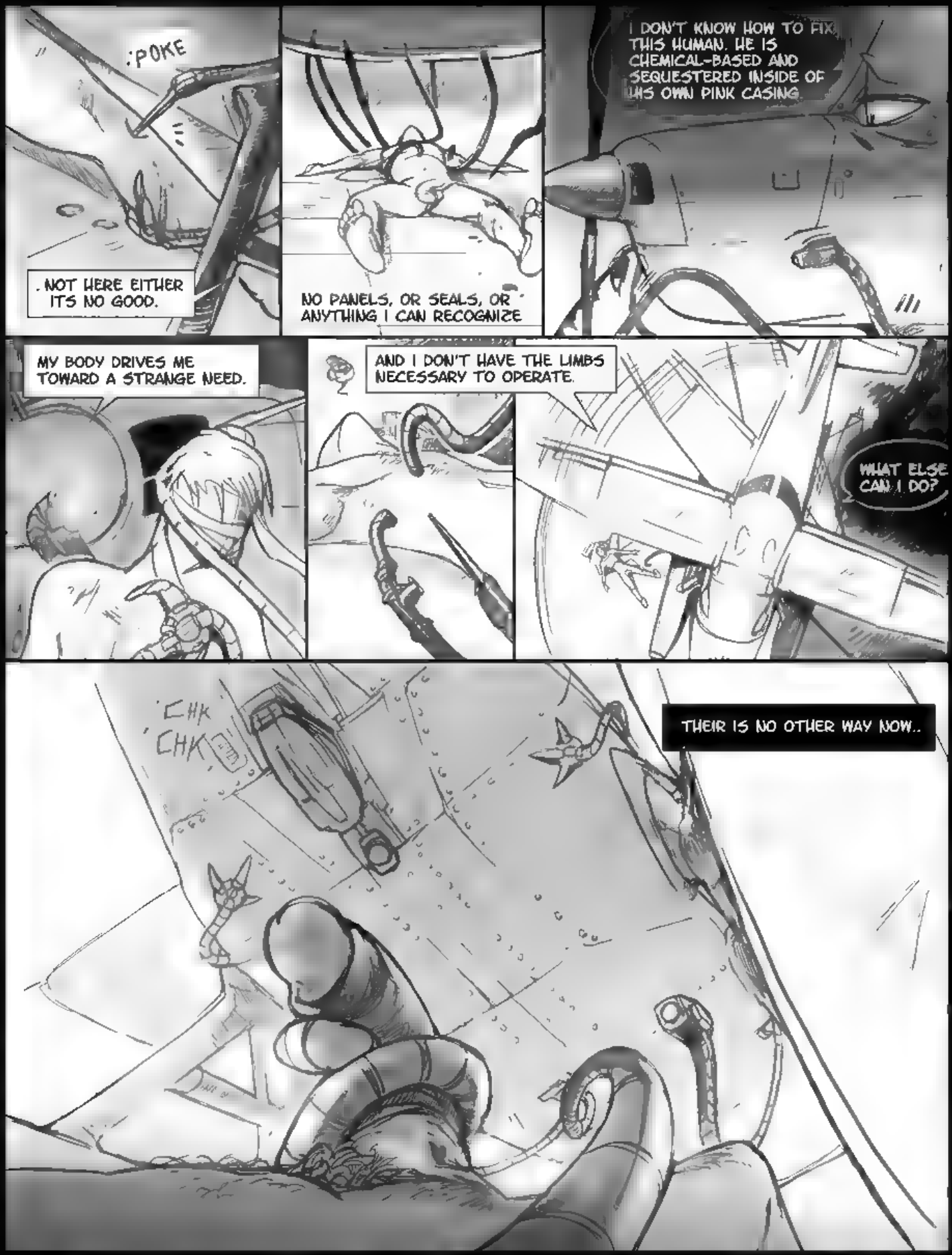
S-SOMEONE'S CHASING THEM! THEY'RE...IS... IS THAT MY TRUCK?!
.SCREAM!
AAAAh!!
HOW IN THE..HEY!
KRRROOOM
JESUS!
A A A A A A
HUMAN...I DON'T SEE OR DETECT ANYTHING IN THAT AREA. PERHAPS WE... WE SHOULD GO?
HEEEEEY! OVER HERE! RUN THIS WAY!
IDLE.
CRACK
STOP CHASING THEM YOU STUPID LEMO-AHCK! PUFFFT!
MR. EYCK?!

MY TRUCK! MY TRUCK WAS CHASING
MR EYCK, THERE WAS NOTHING. .
BUT . THEY WERE JUST THERE! TWO PEOPLE! AND MY TRUCK! I SAW THEM! WHAT...
YOU'VE HIT YOUR HEAD AGAIN, AND YOUR CONDITION IS UNSTABLE. .WE ARE HEADING BACK PLEASE, DON'T STRUGGLE.
VOOO
OH..
BUT . BUT, THERE WERE.. OVER THERE.. HRRRNG!
WHAT . TIME IS. .IT? MY HEAD .
ONE OF THE OTHERS HAS FOUND THE CUTTING IMPLEMENTS WE NEED WE CAN RETURN TO THE HANGAR, HERMANO IS BECOMING DISTRESSED
HHRRRI
BACK IN THE HANGARS .
THEY'RE RETURNING, AND I HAVE THE ACETYLENE CUTTER! WE CAN BEGIN!
QUICKLY, HERMANO IS DESCRIBING INCREASING LEVELS OF PAIN. THE SOONER HE IS FREED, THE BETTER

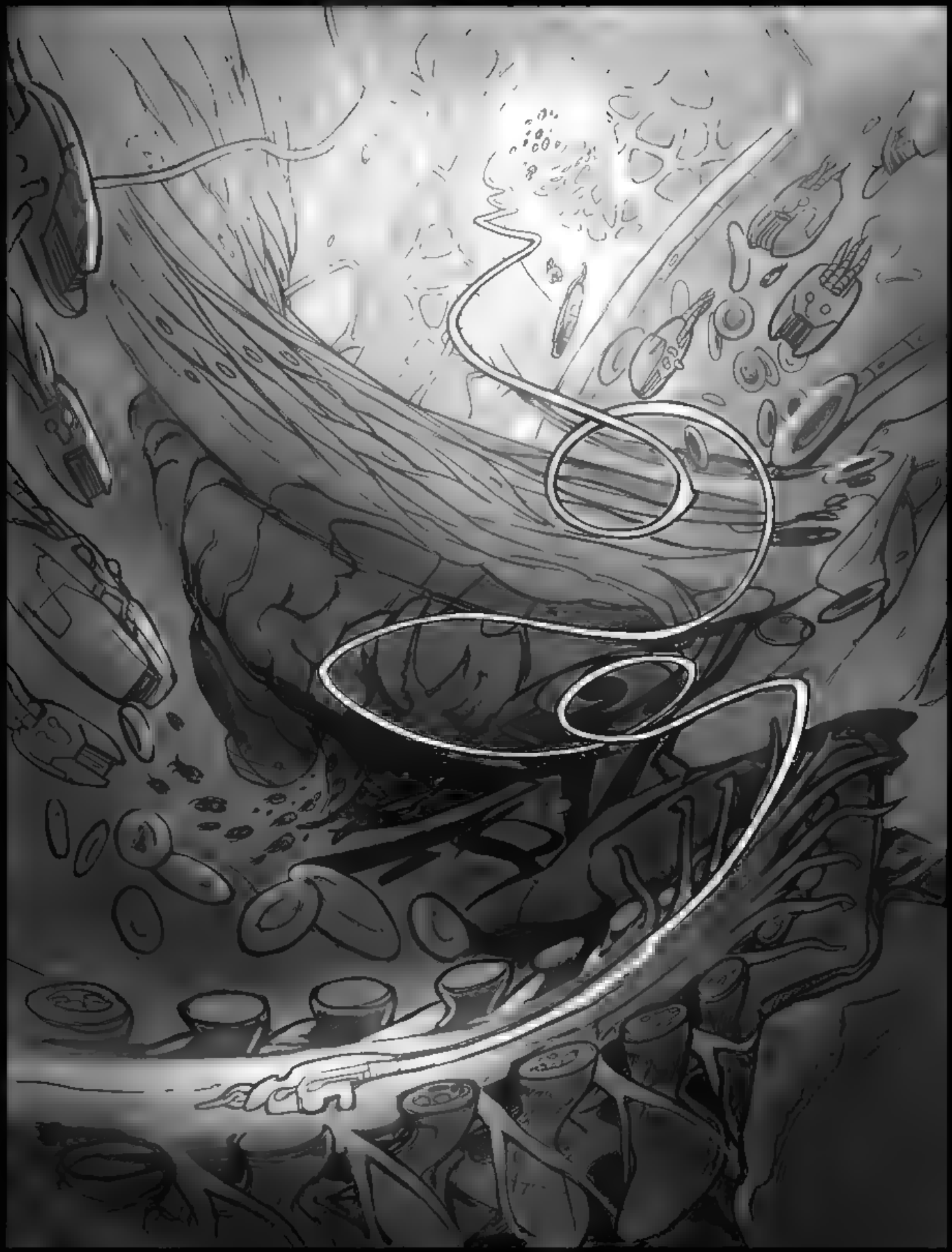

YOU'RE BACK? GOOD PLEASE HURRY THIS IS BECOMING UNBEARABLE
THE TORCHES WERE LOCATED IN MY HANGAR YOU SHOULD HAVE ASKED ME SOONER I JUST NEEDED MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THOSE THINGS TO IDENTIFY THEM
HERE, TAKE THESE, HUMAN WHAT OTHER ASSISTANCE CAN WE PROVIDE?
DID THIS COME WITH A FACE SHIELD?
THE VEHICLE TUG TALKS THE PLANES, THE TRUCKS NOW THE TUG
THIS PROCESS COULD TAKE HOURS IT'S NOT A JOB THAT WE CAN RUSH. IF YOU'RE STILL ABLE TO COMMUNICATE, MAYBE YOU COULD RELAY DIRECTIONS TO EACH OTHER AND WE CAN DO THIS IN SHIFTS
I WILL FOLLOW YOUR LEAD. IF YOU PREFER TO DO SO YOU CAN DESCRIBE THE PROCESS VOCALLY OR I CAN SIMPLY OBSERVE YOUR ACTIONS. THE DATA WILL TRANSFER TO THE OTHERS EITHER WAY
WELL, YOU'RE GOING TO WANT TO ADJUST THE OXYGEN KNOB UNTIL THE CONE TURNS TWO AND BLUE. THIS IS WHAT YOU'LL USE FOR CUTTING. YOU'RE GOING TO WANT TO HOLD THE TORCH OVER THE SURFACE UNTIL IT BEGINS TO LOOK MOLTEN. THEN, PRESS THIS BUTTON HERE AND DRAG THE TORCH ACROSS TO CUT THE HEATED MATERIAL. DON'T MOVE THE TORCH TOO QUICKLY OR IT WON'T CUT
KARRY
ONCE I'M FINISHED HELPING THEIR FRIEND ARE THEY GOING TO LET ME GO? OR ARE THEY GOING TO KILL ME ONCE I'M NO LONGER USEFUL?

"NIGHT"
CLANK.
KLANG
?
"THUD"
DRAG
MR. EYCK!
SLAM.
GRK.
GUH
POKE
NO, NO NO - WAKE UP!
THE HUMAN HAS BEEN PUSHED TOO FAR WHILE DAMAGED. HE WILL CEASE TO FUNCTION SOON
YOU HAVE THE DEEPEST INTEREST IN HIM OUT OF ALL OF US THIS WILL ENSURE HIS CARE IS PROPERLY APPLIED
HIS VITALS ARE DIMINISHING. INTERCRANIAL SWELLING, DEEP TISSUE BRUISING, INTERNAL HEMORRHAGING. THESE ARE EXACERBATED INJURIES. WHY WAS HIS CARE DELAYED FOR SO LONG? HE WILL NEED IMMEDIATE CRITICAL AID YOU MUST PROVIDE IT
M-ME? WHAT DO YOU EXPECT ME TO DO?
BUT..WHAT DO I..
TAKE HIM TO THE ADJACENT HANGAR. IT IS QUIETER THERE, LESS CLUTTERED. I HAVE ORGANIZED IT. YOU WILL NEED TO FIND A WAY TO INTERFACE WITH THE HUMAN IF YOU AND I ARE AT ALL SIMILAR, YOU SHOULD HAVE SOME DENDRITES THAT COULD SERVE THAT PURPOSE.

AAAAAH
Ah-AAH

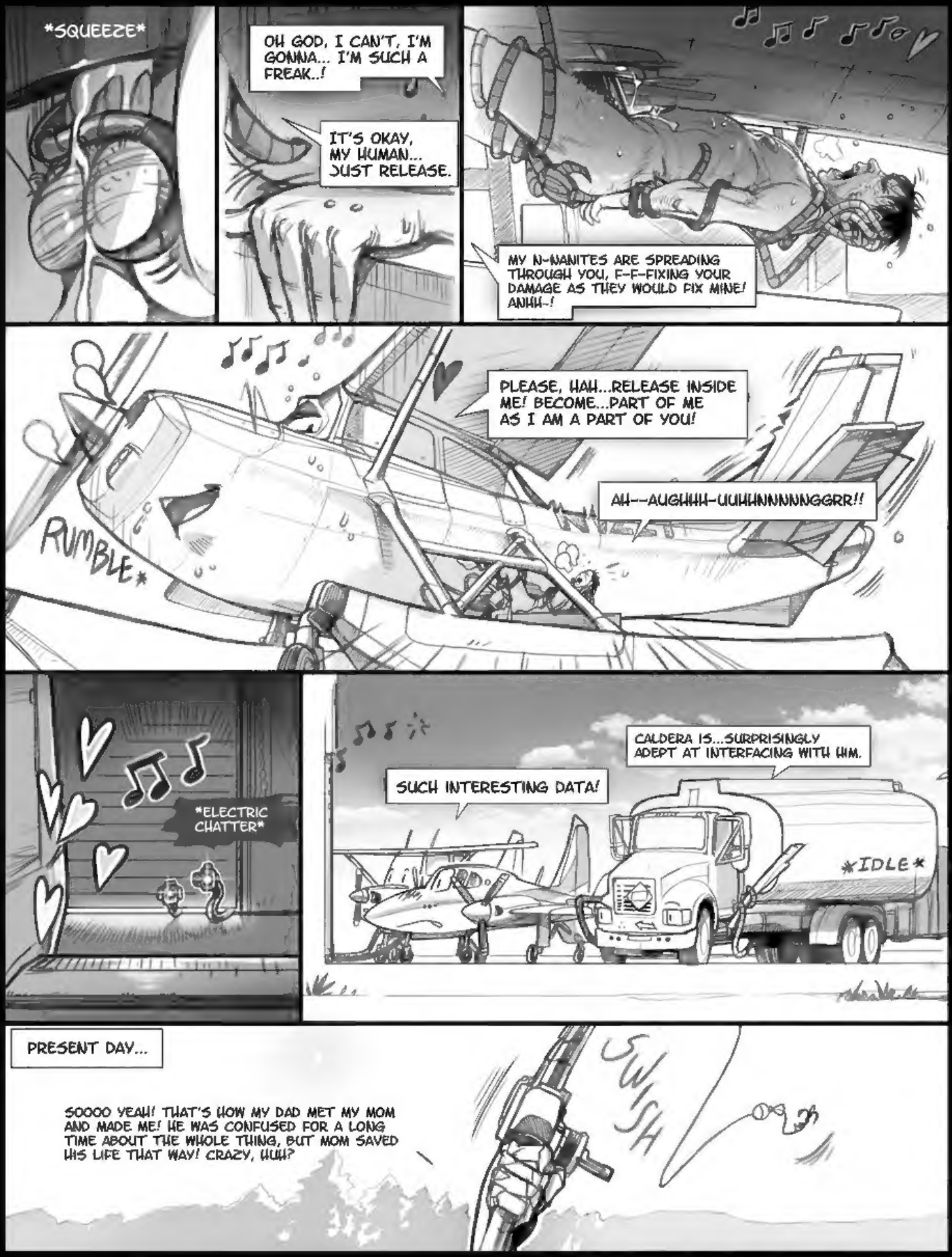

:POKE
. NOT HERE EITHER ITS NO GOOD.
NO PANELS, OR SEALS, OR ANYTHING I CAN RECOGNIZE
I DON'T KNOW HOW TO FIX THIS HUMAN. HE IS CHEMICAL-BASED AND SEQUESTERED INSIDE OF HIS OWN PINK CASING
MY BODY DRIVES ME TOWARD A STRANGE NEED.
AND I DON'T HAVE THE LIMBS NECESSARY TO OPERATE.
WHAT ELSE CAN I DO?
CHK CHK
THEIR IS NO OTHER WAY NOW..

IF I'M CAREFUL.. I COULD GET VENOUS ACCESS VIA THE CORPUS CAVERNOSA. MAYBE...
I.. I DON'T HAVE A CHOICE, HE'S FADING! I JUST..I DON'T WANT TO CRUSH HIM!
KKPH .N-NO, NOT THIS ONE. HOW ABOUT .
SHLIC :
THERE! O-OH!
I-IT'S...! IT'S SO...! I CAN FEEL HIM...INSIDE ME! W-WHAT IS... A-AHHN!
M-MY NANITES SHOULD... SHOULD FIX YOU... MY HUMAN...
:gurgle



URGNNN..
UNNMPH
UNN...
AHH~~
MR. EYCK I'VE ISOLATED YOUR HEMMORAGE AND I AM FIXING IT NOW.
'RUMBLE'
YOU FEEL SOO GOOD..
UHHNN..
KRRRR
I KNEW YOU'D BE A GOOD MATE. JUST RELAX OK?

WHAT IS...H-HOLY SHIT...S-STOP-
GRIP
TH-THIS CAN'T BE HAPPENING. YOU'RE NOT... YOU'RE A MACHINE - YOU'RE A TON OF METAL AND PLASTIC AND GLASS, YOU CAN'T BE CAPABLE OF-
I'M GONNA WAKE UP WITH MY DICK COVERED IN OIL AND MY BOSS STANDING OVER ME AND I'M GONNA BE OUT OF A JOB AND-
YOU...HAAH...YOU STILL THINK YOU'RE IN A DREAM, HUMAN?
RUMBLE
I H-HAVE TO BE! NOTHING ELSE MAKES SENSE! HOW CAN I BE ANYTHING OTHER THAN DREAMING OR INSANE?! TALKING, MOVING, LIVING MACHINES... YOU CAN'T BE REAL!
SWEAT
NNNHH- I'M VERY REAL. WE'RE ALL VERY REAL. PLEASE... JUST STAY CALM. LET ME HELP YOU.
MY BODY...WHY DO I FEEL SO HEAVY? HOW ARE YOU DOING THIS? HOW IS THIS HAPPENING?
RUMBLE
I DON'T KNOW. WE DON'T REALLY KNOW WHAT WE ARE, OR WHY WE'RE ALIVE. WE'RE NOT EVEN REALLY SURE WHAT YOU ARE... ONLY THAT YOU HUMANS PLAYED A PART IN CREATING US. PERHAPS YOU CAN HELP US DISCOVER WHO WE ARE, AND WHAT WE'RE HERE FOR... THIS COULD BE THE START OF SOMETHING WONDERFUL FOR US...
SWITCHES ON RADIO
121.975
128.075
IHAAAAH... THAT WAS... I DON'T KNOW HOW TO DESCRIBE! HOW ARE YOU FEELING, MR. EYCK? DO YOU FEEL THAT YOUR CONDITION HAS IMPROVED? PLEASE, LET ME SEE IF I CAN PLAY YOU SOMETHING...
WHAT?!


SQUEEZE
OH GOD, I CAN'T, I'M GONNA... I'M SUCH A FREAK..!
IT'S OKAY, MY HUMAN... JUST RELEASE.
MY N-NANITES ARE SPREADING THROUGH YOU, F-F-FIXING YOUR DAMAGE AS THEY WOULD FIX MINE! AHHH-!
PLEASE, HAH...RELEASE INSIDE ME! BECOME...PART OF ME AS I AM A PART OF YOU!
AH--AUGHHH-UUHHNNNNNGGRR!!
RUMBLE*
ELECTRIC CHATTER
SUCH INTERESTING DATA!
CALDERA IS...SURPRISINGLY ADEPT AT INTERFACING WITH HIM.
IDLE
PRESENT DAY...
SOOOO YEAH! THAT'S HOW MY DAD MET MY MOM AND MADE ME! HE WAS CONFUSED FOR A LONG TIME ABOUT THE WHOLE THING, BUT MOM SAVED HIS LIFE THAT WAY! CRAZY, HUH?
SWISH

THANKFULLY, TURNED OUT MY DAD'S A HUGE MECHAPHILE, EVEN IF HE WASN'T AWARE OF IT AT FIRST. HE TRIED KEEPING IT SECRET SINCE BACK THEN A LOT OF PEOPLE THOUGHT IT WAS AN UNNATURAL THING, BUT IT CAME OUT EVENTUALLY. SO HE MOVED OUT THERE.
MECHA... PHILE?
...!
Snort.
HA-
HAHAHA
U-HEY! IT'S NOT WHAT YOU THINK!
W-WHOA!
PUSH
MY DAD IS AMAZING! DON'T JUDGE!
SPLASH
S-SORRY!
END